



The State of Working America (An Economic Policy Institute Book)

Lawrence Mishel, Josh Bivens, Elise Gould, Heidi Shierholz

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From reviews of previous editions?

"The State of Working America remains unrivaled as the most-trusted source for a comprehensive understanding of how working Americans and their families are faring in today's economy."?Robert B. Reich

"It is the inequality of wealth, argue the authors, rather than new technology (as some would have it), that is responsible for the failure of America's workplace to keep pace with the country's economic growth. The State of Working America is a well-written, soundly argued, and important reference book."?Library Journal

"An indispensable work on family income, wages, taxes, employment, and the distribution of wealth."?New York Review of Books

Since 1988, *The State of Working America* has provided a comprehensive answer to a question newly in vogue in this age of Occupy Wall Street: To what extent has overall economic growth translated into rising living standards for the vast majority of American workers and their families? In the 12th edition, Lawrence Mishel, Josh Bivens, Elise Gould, and Heidi Shierholz analyze a trove of data on income, jobs, mobility, poverty, wages, and wealth to demonstrate that rising economic inequality over the past three decades has decoupled overall economic growth from growth in the living standards of the vast majority.

The new edition of *The State of Working America* also expands on this analysis of American living standards, most notably by placing the Great Recession in historical context. The severe economic downturn that began in December 2007 came on the heels of a historically weak recovery following the 2001 recession, a recovery that saw many measures of living standards stagnate. The authors view the past decade as "lost" in terms of living standards growth, and warn that millions of American households face another decade of lost opportunity.

Especially troubling, the authors stress, is that while overall economic performance in the decades before the Great Recession was more than sufficient to broadly raise living standards, broad-based growth was blocked by rising inequality driven largely by policy choices. A determinedly data-driven narrative, *The State of Working America* remains the most comprehensive resource about the economic experience of working Americans.

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